Celebrating ten years of

CONFURENCE

Looking Back at Ten Furry Years

The Year of the (Bunny) Rabbit

The Town and Country Hotel, San Diego, California

ConFurence 10

1999

Souvenir Book

"Looking Back at Ten Furry Years"

The Year of the (Bunny) Rabbit

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Cover art by Gary Lee Seto

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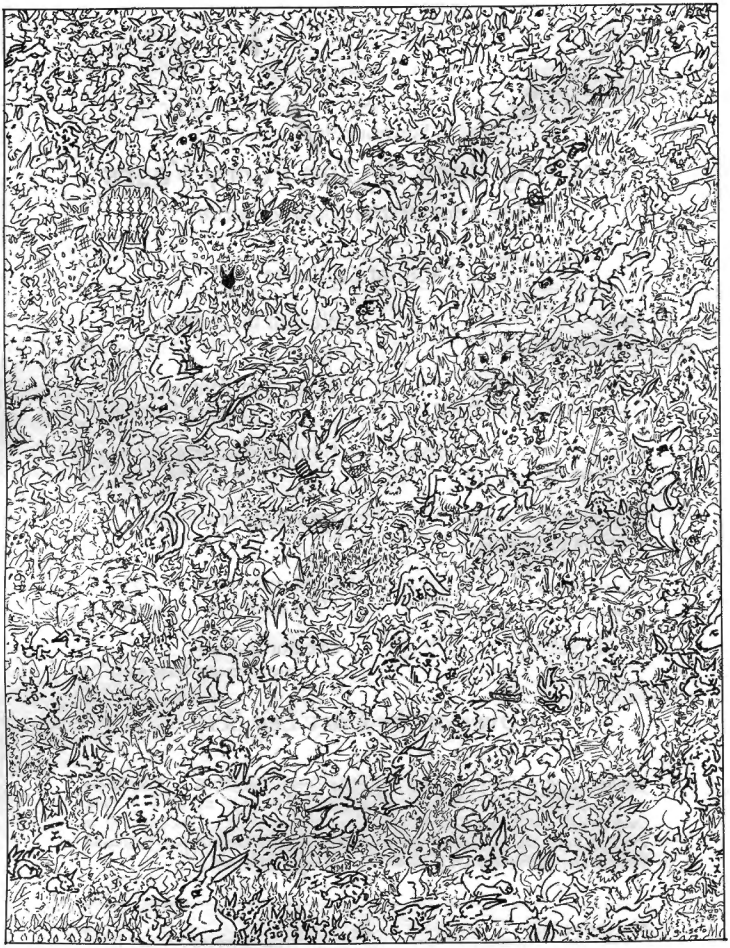

Growing Pains

An introduction by Mark "Sylys Sable" Merlino

Welcome to ConFurence 10!

This year ConFurence moved. We changed our dates to Easter weekend and re-located 100 miles South of Orange County to The Town and Country Resort in San Diego. This move was made because we simply had outgrown all other options for facilities and dates. Many other organizations compete with us for space, and often they have a much higher budget. With hotels and convention facilities, money talks.

It is no coincidence that there are more SF/F conventions on the Easter weekend then any other time of the year. We are not trying to compete with these established cons. They cater to a different interest group then we do, as we have seen over the years. The Town and Country is a much larger facility then we have used before. Hopefully we will not need to re-locate after one or two years due to growth, as we have in the past. It takes time to properly "train" a facility, and thanks to many years of SF/F conventions, the Town and Country should be ready for us. Also, for Furry History buffs, the very first Furry Party (to actually be called a "Furry Party") happened at the Town and Country in 1985 at the Western regional Science Fiction Convention, Westercon.

I don't believe my partner Rodney, nor anyone else involved in CF from the beginning, ever expected us to last this long, or grow as large as we have. Since CF 0, in 1989, I have written articles for our Collection Book dealing with different aspects of Furry Fandom. To me, being Furry has always been a positive experience, from my earliest personal fantasies that kept me from being bored with everyday life, to the wonderful family that I have been a part of for over 10 years.

Many people have tried to define just what this Furry "thing" is, and why we share these common interests. Some of these attempts have been successful, to a point, but none have been accepted as a concise definition by the Furry community at large. A friend suggested to me that we might be able to avoid disagreements, and controversy, if we could only agree on

what we Furry people ARE, and what we aren't. Then we could easily spot the "pretenders" and the curious observers who so often misjudge us and avoid them. An interesting concept, but I wondered just WHO was going to create this Furry template by which we would judge others? Some sort of international Furry committee, like the UN? No one person could do it alone. We would have to have representatives from all over the world, from all the diverse special interest groups. Everyone who is Furry and wants to be one would want their own personal interests represented. How long would such a project take? Would it really solve anything?

One concept that most Furry people seem to agree on is that by combining the human and animal species traits, we arrive at an improved being. Mark Twain is credited with saying that if a human was crossed with a cat, it would greatly improve the human, but sadly degrade the cat. Humans are a confusing species. We have a great deal of brain, much of which we do not seem to know how to use.

Our imagination and ability to reason are a mixed blessing, as it often allows us to fool ourselves, and we see the animals that share this world with us being free from the burdens of our confusing society. Even if the combined beings we imagine are similar to us, and have many of the same problems, like prejudice and war, they are still different from us in some exotic way. It may be just esthetics, but our furry, feathered, and scaled creations seem to have an almost universal attraction; we Furry people just seem to notice it more than others.

The most important thing to remember is that we, no matter how much we dream and design, are still human. Humans will react in a similar fashion to various situations individually and in groups of various sizes. We want very much to be individuals, to stand out and be recognized and respected AND, we want to be a part of something, have comrades who share our ideals, to belong to something greater and not be alone and outcast. These contradictions often lead to misunderstandings that in turn cause the social and political problems that we are all too familiar with. We hear about it daily, thanks to the News media.

As the Furry community has grown, we find ourselves challenged in many ways. Ten years ago people in the established Science Fiction and Fantasy Fandom remarked on the unity and friendliness of Furry Fans. Of course, their flavor of fandom was considerably larger and had been around for over 60 years. I was involved in SF/F Fandom for ten years before Furry Fandom emerged from the den (and blinking, stepped into the sun...). There were a lot of good people working very hard, organizing, publishing, creating, all for the good of Fandom. There were also problems, disagreements, rumors, infighting, prejudice and hate. Some of us in Furry Fandom are well aware that we are not immune to the same kind of trouble. It's what happens when any human community grows.

Furry Fandom has grown, and so has ConFurence. There are now other Furry conventions happening on a regular basis in the US and Europe, and our larger family is attracting more attention. This can be a mixed blessing, but we must remember that publicity helps us find more of our Furry kin. Do you remember the feeling you had when you first discovered Furry Fandom, that there were others who shared your interests and passion?

I believe it is worth the controversy caused by any negative publicity if it means that more Furry people can find their way "home". Some say that because of misinformation and the resulting bad stereotypes, they must adopt a "don't ask-don't tell" attitude about their Furriness. Some are bitter and lash out at other Furries, blaming them for the problems. There will always be close-minded or reactionary responses to anything that is "different". Prejudice is not going to go away anytime soon.

That Furry Definition concept cuts both ways, just like any label. I believe that we can overcome many of the misunderstandings easier by sticking together rather than by fighting amongst ourselves. If we don't want to be judged unfairly by outsiders who are important, why should we turn on others in our community and judge them? Pogo possum's loyal friend, Porkypine, once stated, "We have met the enemy, and he is us". It takes time to overcome prejudice and gain understanding, and some people will never be reached. That is a part of what humans are, and perhaps why we desire to move away from the negative aspects of our species. We're Furry, but we are still only human, but remember... just because you're human, it doesn't mean you have to act like one!

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Our Guests

"She is our Jane Austin, and boy are we glad to have her." That's The Science Fiction Book Club, speaking about our literary Guest of Honor for ConFurence Ten, **Patricia C. Wrede.** Known for fantasy stories with a decidedly untraditional slant, Ms. Wrede is perhaps best be remembered for her series The Enchanted Forest Chronicles (*Dealing with Dragons, Searching for Dragons, Calling on Dragons,* and *Talking to Dragons).* No prizes for guessing, they're about dragons… and plucky, determined princesses, good witches, bad (and often melting) wizards, thick headed princes; talking cats; talking lizards; a unicorn or two… well, you get the idea. Other books by Ms. Wrede include *Shadow Magic* (her first) and *The Book of Enchantments,* a collection of her short stories. Ms. Wrede worked for several years as an accountant and financial analyst – but now, happily, is making her living as a full-time writer. And for this weekend, she'll be participating in several workshops and discussion groups on the fine art of writing fantasy, and reading it, for enjoyment!

Many furry fans, comic book collectors, pagans, and SF art fans are familiar with the works of **Mary Hanson-Roberts.** Mary made a name for herself at SF art shows throughout North America with her fantasy illustrations, many featuring her created species of gentle, lion-like cat-taurs. More recently, she became known to many furry fans for her series *Here Comes A Candle* – one of the longest running (and most popular in reader poles) series in the *Furrlough* anthology from Radio Comix. She's also illustrated numerous comic stories for Antarctic Press and Shanda Fantasy Arts. In an entirely different vein, Mary illustrated an entire deck of Tarot cards in 1992. Look for Mary to be hanging around the Shanda Fantasy Arts Table in the Den of Dealers… and to be speaking in the Artists' Lounge.

Our musical Guest of Honor, **Cynthia McQillin,** has quite a history behind her. Her cassette *Crystal Singer,* recorded in the early 1980's, was the very first tape released by Off Centaur Publications – for years one of the foremost publishers of filk music in the U.S. Over the years she has written more than 1,000 songs, and recorded some 300 of them on cassette and CD. And at least a few dozen of them have celebrated one thing: Cats. Oh, plenty of songs about dragons and were-critters and other mythical beasties too. But most famously cats. Cyndi and her partner, **Dr. Jane Robinson** (filk Guest of Honor at ConFurence 8) write and perform together as the duo Mid-Life Crisis. Look for both of them to be singing at our Friday night Filk Concert, along with several other musical guests.

And finally our Special Guests, **Robert and Margaret Carspecken (R&M Creative Endeavors).** Margaret is best known at ConFurence for her many paintings and illustrations featuring foxes -- most notably Marsha RedFox, she of 1001 culinary delights. Working with her husband **Robert** (writer/graphics designer), their 'furry' work has been featured in a variety of publications, including *Furrlough, The Ever-Changing Palace, Warthaven/Vixen's Keep*, and upcoming works from Shanda Fantasy Arts. They got their 'furry' feet wet in amateur publications such as *RowrBrazzle* and *Ink Spots.* **Sweet Treats**, a dessert cookbook featuring Marsha, has been a hit at conventions as well as on their FoxWeb page (http://www.ozfoxes.com). Look for the Carspeckens to be speaking together at several workshops and discussion groups as well.

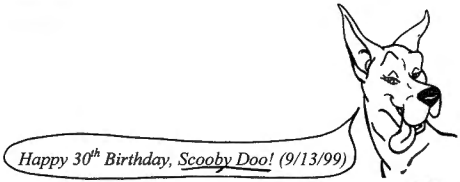
Furry Definition

Furr•ry (fur'e) *n.* **–ries. 1.** Any of various animals having two, four, six or more limbs and characteristically friendly, often sexually so, exsisting in a variety of (currently) fantasy genre worlds: Baby Sinclair, Catdog, Chester Ringtail, Daggett & Norbert, Don Karnage, The Easter Bunny, Erma Felna, Fritz the Cat, The Great Owl, Hazel, Jack Salem, Kovu, Kin & Gavalen, Ky the deer, Mr. Ed, Pepe le Pew, Rene Fromage, Reynard the Fox, Scooby Doo, Sydney Fisher, Tank Girl's Booga.

2. Creator, collector, or lover of anthropomorphic animal art, comics, writings, animation, etc.

3. Builder or performer of furred, feathered or scaled animal costumes.

4. A lifestyle revolving around a love and emulation of furries.



Once again, the directors of ConFurence want to thank all of our hard-working staff. Many of these folks work year around. These people include those who volunteer at the convention and work so hard; our Guests, who make our convention interesting and entertaining, and our wonderful Sponsors and Super Sponsors, who help pay for it all. This is your convention, and we hope you love it as much as we do.

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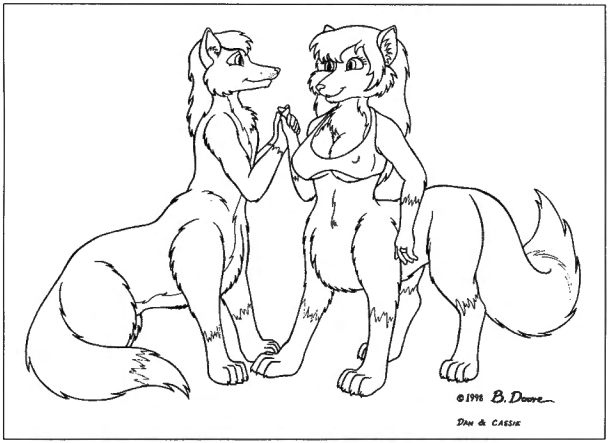
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Guest of Honor - Artist

Mary Hanson-Roberts

When I'm asked to provide stuff like this, I invariably forget everything pertinent. But, if you can get past that, here goes.

I grew up and went to school in Massachusetts, a nice place to do it in if you're interested in art. (My teenage hangout was the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.) One problem, though, is that they don't teach fine arts majors how to actually make a living. I always drew and would probably have qualified for a semipro designation, but didn't make it a full time profession until shortly after moving to Florida in 1977. At that time I was primarily a freelance commercial illustrator, occasionally displaying work in galleries and outdoor festivals. It was not long after this that yours truly discovered science fiction and fantasy conventions... a watershed event. I converted. Commercial illustration just could not measure up. (Well, OK, financially it could, but not in the satisfaction department.) For several years my livelihood consisted entirely of submitting artwork to convention art shows.

My published work includes the Hanson-Roberts Tarot deck, coloring on the Universal Waite deck (published by U.S. Games Systems), cover art for the Tales of Witch World Vol II (Tor Books), maps of the Witch World, cover art for Charles Fontenay's Kipton series (mysteries for young people published by Royal Fireworks Press), and interior illustrations for various magazines, largely in the gaming field. I've done' T-shirt designs, newsletter illustrations, comics and three coloring books.

My graphic novel, *Here Comes a Candle*, is something of an anomaly. Originally intended as an experiment, it appeared in serial form through Antarctic Press, and will shortly be available as a separate publication. The characters appear sporadically in in-betweenquels. This in one of my current projects, along with yet another Tarot deck, and perpetually creating new pieces for the convention shows I like so well.

It's no accident that my style reminds some people of children's book illustrations; I've always been a sucker for symbolism, and such illustrations are often the first works of art for which we develop an affection. My stuff is meant to be affectionate; if art is communication, then perhaps I can convey the genuine friendship I feel for those to whom my work speaks. (Yes, I know that sounds hokey, but why else do you think I use pictures rather than words?)

CONFURENCE
X
A DECADE OF FURRIES !!
PREDATOR & PREY
Relationships
BY BLIZZA
PETER RABBIT
SALT
YIPE!
XIAN JAGUAR 99'

Guest of Honor - Filk Composer

Cynthia McQuillin

Cindy McQuillin has always liked most animals better than most people, and it was with great delight that she accepted Vinson's invitation to be this year's filk guest at ConFurrence -- the best of both worlds. Cindy has been singing, writing songs and nurturing critters for as long as she can remember, and it's not surprising that so many of her lyrics and stories should be about, or from the point of view of, real and/or imaginary animals and "misunderstood monsters".

Cindy has been involved with filking for almost 25 years first in the LA area, and lately in the San Francisco Bay area. She has had more than 300 songs published, including many about cats (most of the songs on the "Bedlam Cats" collection are hers), werewolves, dragons and gryphons. She is especially fond of cats of all sizes, shapes and species, and, in fact, is able to converse at great length with them in their own (mostly silent) language. I keep telling her she could be a great pet psychologist, but she says it would simply be too vexing to deal with all those neurotic owners who think the *pet* is the one with the problem!

Cindy has written several wonderful stories featuring anthropomorphic characters, including 'Cat's World' (*Catfantastic III*), 'The Raven and the Night Sky' (*Daughters of Nyx*), 'Winter' (*Tesseract*), 'Seliki' (*Rump Parliament*), and most recently 'Toyen', a fox-maiden tale (*Fantasy Worlds Anthology*). In addition, she is trying to sell her first novel, "Singer in the Shadow", which features a psychic tarantula as one of the major characters. (If you think tarantulas aren't furry, you've never seen one up close!)

Cindy lives in Berkeley with "Dr. Jane" Robinson (her partner in life and music), several other people, a malamute, and, of course, two cats. In spite of the fact that she identifies herself as a Hamster and Jane identifies as a Ferret, they have shared the same burrow happily and harmoniously for more than 13 years.

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AN
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Guest of Honor - Author

Patricia Collins Wrede

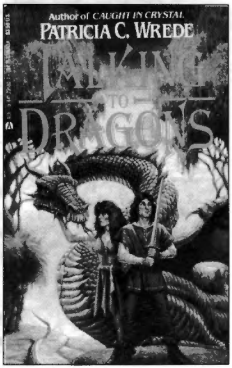
Patricia Collins Wrede was born in Chicago, Illinois and is the eldest of five children. She started writing in seventh grade. She attended Carleton College in Minnesota, where she majored in Biology and managed to avoid taking any English courses at all. She began work on her first novel, Shadow Magic, just after graduating from college in 1974. She finished it five years later and started her second book at once, having become permanently hooked on writing by this time.

Patricia received her M.B.A. from the University of Minnesota in 1977. She worked for several years as a financial analyst and accountant, first with the Minnesota Hospital Association, then with B. Dalton Booksellers, and finally at the Dayton Hudson Corporation headquarters. In 1985, shortly before the publication of her fifth book, she left the world of the gainfully employed to try winging it on her own.

Her interests include sewing, embroidery, desultory attempts at gardening, chocolate, not mowing the lawn, High Tea, and programming computers. She is a vegetarian, and currently lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota with her cats, Merlin, Nimue, and Brisen.

Her books include:

Shadow Magic
Daughter of Witches
The Seven Towers
Talking to Dragons
The Harp of Imach Thyssel
Caught in Crystal
Snow White and Rose Red
Dealing with Dragons
Mairelon the Magician
Searching for Dragons
Calling on Dragons
The Raven Ring



Special Guests

Robert & Margaret Carspecken

From their web page www.ozfoxes.com...

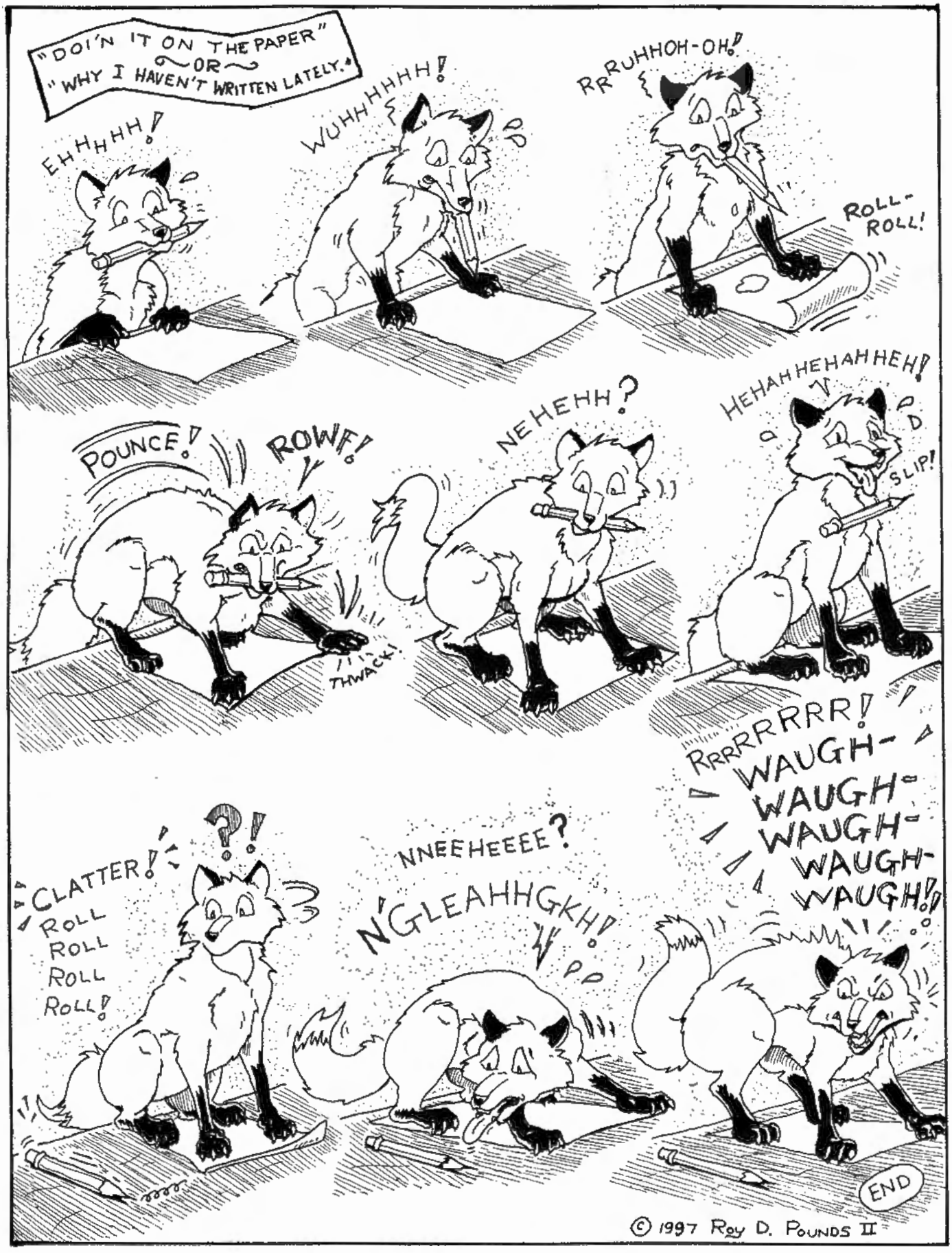
What are OzFoxes?

In our case, it's us - that is, folks who like foxes (and most other animals, too), who happen to live in the Ozarks region of southwest Missouri (Oz). That's about as complicated as it gets.

R&M Creative Endeavors

That's us, too. It is devoted to animal-related art, fiction, music, poetry and publishing... pretty much any way we can find to share our appreciation of nature. We happen to be Foxophiles first and foremost, but we appreciate the natural world in all its splendor and look for ways to share that with others of the same ilk.

Known in mundane life as Robert & Margaret Carspecken, we have widely diverse backgrounds. Between us we cover a lot of creative ground, including writing, painting, cartooning, animation, advertising and publication design, and even some computer programming. These days we spend most of our time in the realms of art and cartooning, and our art can be seen at conventions all over the U.S.


"DOI'N IT ON THE PAPER"
OR
"WHY I HAVEN'T WRITTEN LATELY."
EHHHHH!
WUHHHHHH!
RRRUHHOH-OH!
ROLL-ROLL!
POUNCE!
ROWF!
THWACK!
NEHEHH?
HEHAHHEHAHHEH!
SLIP!
CLATTER!
?!
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL!
NNEEHEEEE?
N'GLEAHHGKH!
RRRRRRRR!
WAUGH-
WAUGH-
WAUGH-
WAUGH-
WAUGH!
END
© 1997 Roy D. Pounds II

ConFurence
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Stephanie Aloisio '99

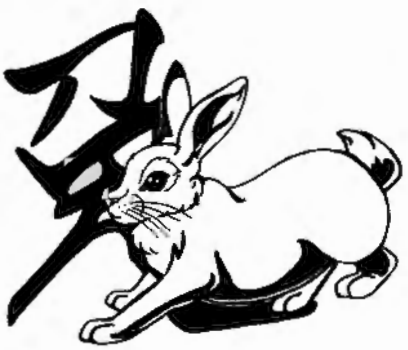
Sarkoa

"PLAYBOY
BUNNY"
'78
JWILLARD

The Year of the Rabbit

I am in tune with the
Pulse of the universe
In my quiet and solitude
I hear the melodies of the soul.
I float above commonplace
Dissent and decay
I subdue by my ability to conform.
I color my word
In delicate pastel hues.
I epitomize harmony and inner peace.

I am the Rabbit.



1999 is the Year of the Fire Rabbit! There are twelve animals in the Chinese calendar, and only five Earth elements. The pairing of fire and rabbit happens but once every 60 years. In some Eastern countries, the Rabbit is also known as the Hare or the Cat.

Rabbits are born under the sign of virtue. In Chinese terms this means that they inherit both the artistic and social graces. Although a feminine sign, males and females born in the Year of the Rabbit are highly refined and seem to posses an inner mystery. The Rabbit is sensitive and circumspect in their day to day dealings. People born under the sign of the Rabbit love beauty in all forms and place great emphasis on establishing a beautiful home. They also have a fine nose for a bargain that often leads them to be collectors, usually of fine antiques and paintings. Rabbits dress elegantly, normally with an eye for high fashion, and lady Rabbits in particular are said to have wonderful hair.

Rabbits respond poorly to pressure and emotional stress. What's more, a Rabbit may sometimes abuse their position if given power beyond their capability. In general, Rabbits do not worry too much about international disasters as they have an aversion to suffering. Should a Rabbit take on the world and it's problems, the Chinese warn that they quickly cave in. Rabbits place their home, it's comforts and family life above all else.

Because Rabbits listen well, their judgement, particularly on financial matters, is extremely sound. Since Rabbits do not deal particularly easily with emotional upsets, their advice on such matters is usually less profound. However, a Rabbit will always listen carefully when spoken to, and their readiness to sit quietly when others talk frequently casts them into the role of the diplomat, a job in which they excel.

As creatures of habit Rabbits seldom act impulsively. Routine is paramount to the Rabbit's well being and they are seldom found making sudden changes to their lifestyle. Methodical and cautious, the Rabbit's ordered approach to life has its uses. In business, they keep their word and generally don't make promises they cannot fulfil. Rabbits are blessed with a quick wit and an often gossipy sense of humour. They adore good food and fine wines, and enjoy gossip even more. There is something of a snob in every Rabbit that sometimes forces friendships to exist on a somewhat superficial level. Given a choice, a Rabbit will choose an evening in the company of fashionable people to one spent on their own.

Rabbit Years

1903, 1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011, 2023

Animals of the Chinese Zodiac

Boar - Will do anything for anybody. Model of sincerity and honor. Occasionally fits of rage. Self-sacrificing and altruistic.

Dog - Honest, loyal, sincere. Believes in justice for all. Fights for principles. Sometimes bad tempered, self-righteous.

Dragon - Charismatic and colorful. Wants to be center of attention. Very arrogant.

Goat - Sensitive, creative and multitalented. Eccentric. Much Fortitude. Loves to be loved, hates to be pushed.

Horse - Confident and proud. Prone to erratic behavior. Heart is in right place. Scatty.

Monkey - Wily and cunning. Ignores regimented rules. Free spirit.

Ox - Calm, patient, studied character. Takes things slow, steady pace. At times rather dictatorial. Always industrious.

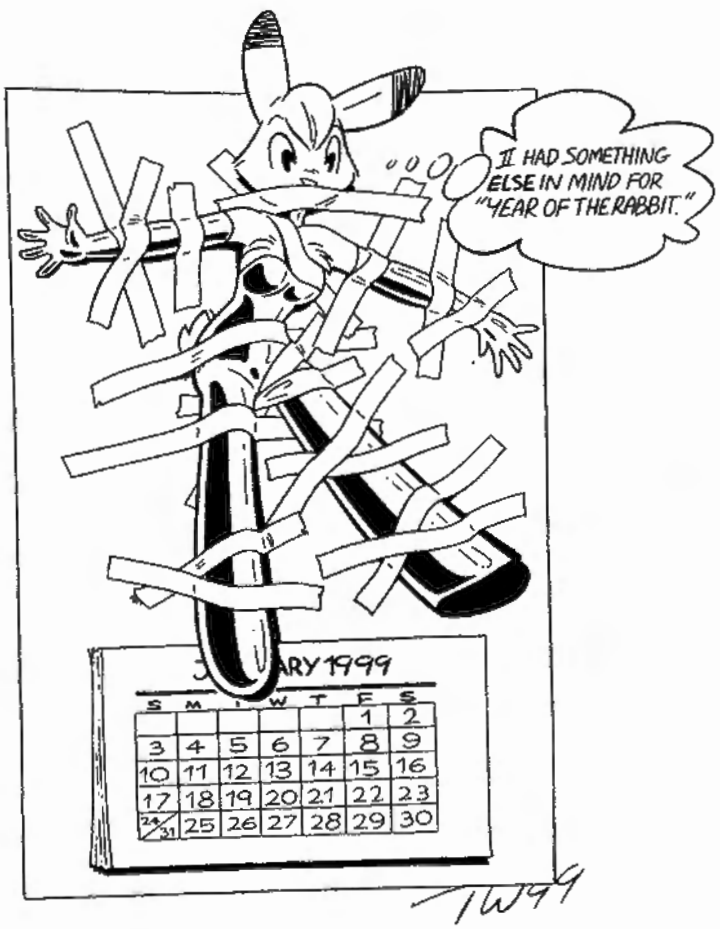
Rabbit - Also know as the **Cat or Hare**. Very sensitive soul. Loves spending time at home. Although quiet and discreet, still ambitious. Self-indulgent.

Rat - Essentially charming. Compassionate. Renowned for thrift and love of family, at times rather superficial.

Rooster - Brave and enthusiastic. Notoriously picky. Highly intelligent. Rarely has wool pulled over its eyes.

Snake - High moral principles, mostly when applied to other. Sophisticated and charming. More than meets the eye.

Tiger - Very warm, loving. Independent minded. Pays scant regard for other's feelings while pursuing fun and freedom.



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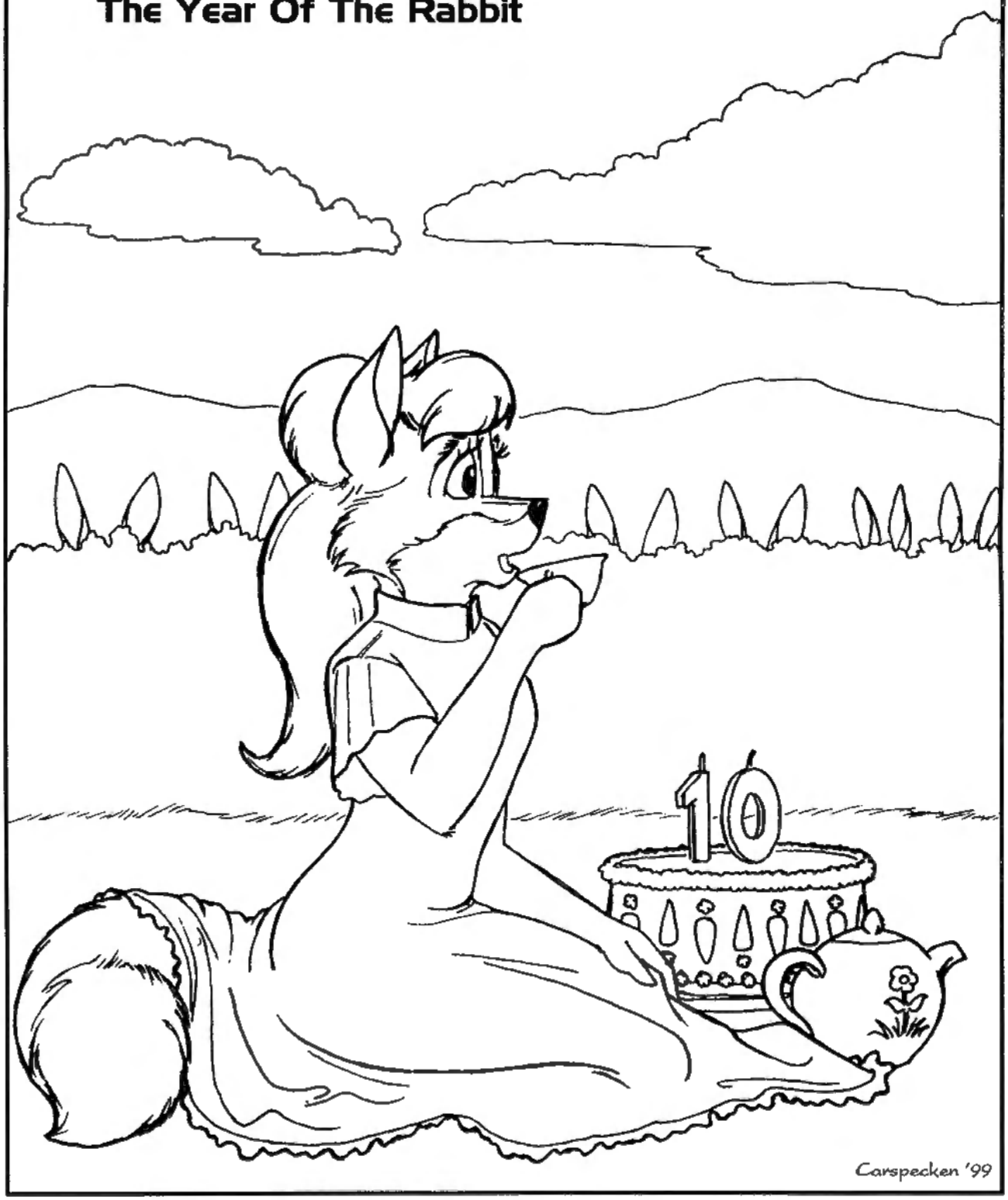
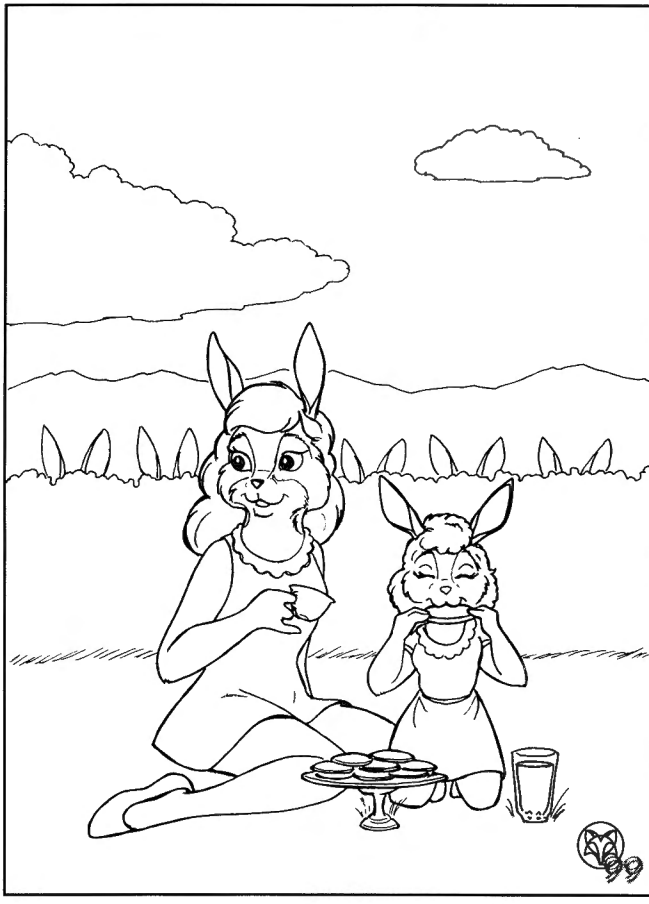
Easter Weekend
The Year Of The Rabbit





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Jim Cansdale
Perriloux

Lyon Castro
Lyon

David Cotelessa
Spino

Dee Davison

Jeff Davison

Brenda DiAntonis-Lonberger
Xian Jaguar

John DiAntonis-Lonberger
ArticWolf

Romano Eberwein

David Ewell
G.I. Joe

Tony Ferro

Patrick Garvey
YiffyFox

Heiko Gemming
Mran

Peter N. Glaskowsky
Lochiel

William Earl
Haskell

Brock Hoagland

Masaki Iwahara
W.Crow

Ron Johnson

James P Kelley
Krin

Boyce Gerald Kline Jr.
Admiral Kline

Doyle Lawson

Gary Leasia

Lee Leduc

Shane Longo
Ferian

Jake McDermott

James McMelhan

Paul P. McNutt
Pokey

Judy Oxford
Jwyldragon

Michael Pena
Sparrow (A Rabbit)

John Pennington
Edward Fox

Christopher Pesl

Timothy Rea
Jurann Foxtail

Michael R Reed
Old Husky

Gary Renaud
Sleepy Jackal

D.W. Souther
Goat

Brian Thomas
Cinnamon

Gary L. Whalen

Dave Wilson
T'Chall

"All the News That's Fit to Print."

The New York Times.

THE WEATHER

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Randy Antinger
1-22-99

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Conrad Thonger
Kzorith

Richard Williams

Shannon Wilson
Shan'slox

GIBSON '99

HAE 97

Kishma '99

... And all this time you thought I was a rabbit
Hoppy Easter!
©-99

The Furry Top 10

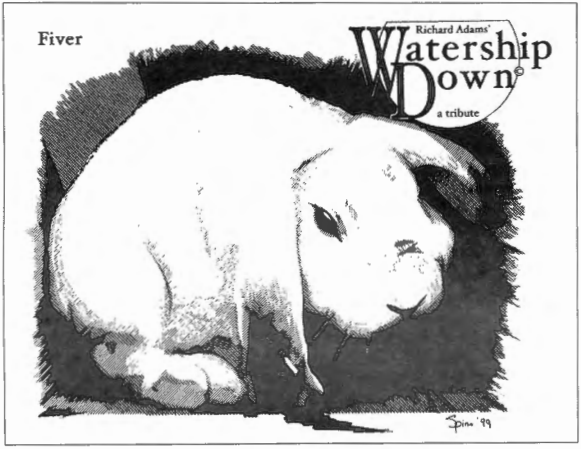
At CF9 Roz Gibson conducted a survey of Furry Favorites.
In honor of this being the 10th CF, here are the top ten in a variety of categories...

MOVIES

1 - The Secret of NIMH
2 - Robin Hood (Disney)
3 - The Lion King
4 - Cats Don't Dance
5 - Balto
6 - Animalympics
7 - Watership Down
8 - The Fox and the Hound
9 - Bambi
10 - The Great Mouse Detective

TV SHOWS

1 - Animaniacs
2 - Talespin
3 - Tiny Toons
4 - Road Rovers
5 - Kimba the White Lion
6 - The Muppet Show (tie)
6 - Pinky and the Brain (tie)
8 - Bugs Bunny Show
9 - Chip and Dale Rescue Rangers
10 - Swat Kats



BOOKS

1 - *Watership Down*, Richard Adams
2 - The Moreau Trilogy, S.Andrew Swann
3 - The Spellsinger Series, Alan Dean Foster
4 - The Chanur series, C.J. Cherryh (tie)
4 - *Mus of Kerbridge,* Paul Kidd (tie)
6 - *Architect of Sleep*, Steven Boyette
7 - The Redwall series, Brian Jaques
8 – *Hunter's Moon* (aka The Foxes of Firstdark), Garry Kilworth (tie)
8 The Sholan Alliance series, Lisanne Norman (tie)
10 *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH,* Robert C. O'Brian (tie)
10 *Star Trek: Uhura's Song* (tie)

MEDIA CHARACTERS

1 - Bugs Bunny
2 - Pepe le Pew
3 - Buster and Babs
3 - Hobbes of Calvin and Hobbes
3 - Minerva Mink
6 - 'the Dog' of Footrot Flats (tie)
6 - Pinky and the Brain (tie)
6 – Pogo (tie)
6 - Wile E. Coyote (tie)
10 - Daffy Duck (tie)
10 – Fifi of Tiny Toons (tie)
10 - Gadget Hackwrench of Chip & Dale's Rescue Rangers (tie)
10 - Garfield (tie)
10 - Kimba (tie)
10 - Lola Bunny of Space Jam (tie)
10 - Robin Hood, Disney's (tie)

REAL ANIMALS

1 - Fox
2 - Wolf
3 - Cats, domestic
4 - Horse
5 - Felines, wild/big cats
6 - Otters (tie)
6 - Rabbits, bunnies (tie)
6 - Skunk (tie)
10 - Coyote (tie)
10 - Dogs (tie)
10 - Ferret (tie)

"Animal Science!"

Official ConFurence Interactive Page

for your thoughts, sketches and autographs

The Origins of ConFurence

by Rod O'Riley

The inevitable question arises in a situation like this: Where to start? Well, I suppose I'll take a cue from the Mad Hatter and the March Hare: Start at the beginning. And when I come to the end, stop.

It was somewhere in 1988, and my partner-in-crime on so many fannish endeavors, Mark Merlino, had a question for me. We had been putting on Furry Parties at SF conventions for about two years at the time, and (as I described in my article for ConFurence Seven's Souvenir Book) they had become rather an institution at many cons. Mark, known furrily as Sylys (or Sy) Sable, asked me simply this: "So, you think we're ready to try starting our own convention now?"

This actually wasn't the first time the subject had come up. Since Mark was one of the founders of the Cartoon/Fantasy Organization (perhaps the first anime fan club in America) and had been a member in ASIFA (the International Animated Film Society), we had already discussed the concept of maybe having a convention for fans of cartoons. (This was back in the tail-end of the 'bad days', when animation looked to be a struggling art form much in need of a fan reviva.) That never came about (oh, the speaker fees we were quoted!), but the idea of starting up a convention based around some of our mutual interests stuck. The popularity of the furry parties gave us the idea that Furry Fandom might just have enough of a base that we could draw from for a larger gathering. And,

Flyer for the original ConFurence 0

conversely, a convention might be another method by which we could 'shake the trees' and see if any new furry fans would come falling out.

Naturally I said, "Yeah, I think we're ready." The punning name of 'Con-FUR-ence' came to us quite easily.

But, we weren't crazy. While we were both old hands at going to SF conventions, and both had a lot of opinions about good things to keep and bad things to lose, we knew that the skill of actually organizing a con was completely new to us. And, on top of that, we were trying to start a 'special-focus' convention for what was, at the time, still a very newly organized fandom. Would we find the help, and more importantly the attendees we would need? Then, Sy hit on an idea: A 'dry run' convention, trying out some of our new concepts and seeing if the fans would respond. We'd call it 'ConFurence Zero', with the 'real thing', ConFurence One, to follow if things worked out.

So, the word was given, and off we were on a grand search for our first hotel. Found one rather quickly too, the brand-new Red Lion Inn in Costa Mesa. (Yes, that one.) And, true to our nature, we were about to get a great big lesson in dealing with hotels: What you get depends (almost, but not quite entirely) on how many you're bringing with you. As we were very new in the con game, we weren't going to make a pie-in-the-sky estimate… a hundred or so, we said. So, very soon after the Red Lion expressed initial interest, they said "Thank you, no thank you, g'bye."

Panic! What to do? Well, run around like crazy to just about every other hotel in Orange County for starts… and then, wind up right near where we started. At the Holiday Inn Bristol Plaza, right across the street from the Red Lion. They were more than happy to have us, especially in January when many hotels couldn't *give* their rooms away. Okay then, next step – tell the furries. We knew fur fans were out there, if we could just get the word to them.

The networks not quite being what they are today (MUCKs? The Web? What're those?), the best way to spread the word was through the growing field of furry fanzines. *Furversion* was still growing strong, and the APA *Rowrbrazzle* was growing with every issue. So we made up flyers, hit the fanzines and the comic book stores, and tried to let furs know we were there. No real Guests of Honor at Zero. Back then we had no idea who would be thought of as a 'well-known furry'. And little start-up cons don't tend to get SF and Fantasy authors or big media folks as guests, even we wouldn't get any until ConFurence Three.

January 1989. ConFurence Zero. About ninety people had signed up, and about sixty-five of them showed up. And thirty of *them* promptly fell over with a nasty overnight flu… oy!

Okay, hardly an auspicious beginning. But even back then, we had the inklings of some parts of ConFurence that would become mainstays. We spent a lot of time asking fans what they wanted to see in a convention. We started the SIG (Special Interest Group) idea, where subject matter would be more free-form and open, and the round-robin atmosphere would hopefully break down the boring 'college lecture' atmosphere of many convention panels. And we started the species SIGs, thinking that wolf fans and

fox fans and weasel fans might like to meet one another. Little did we know! Fursuiting was simple back then too, with just one award for the fans' favorite. We literally picked the winner based on the loudness of applause. And the very first art show, setting the pattern, was bigger than we expected.

So, it seems like the experiment worked. We moved on to ConFurence One the next January, at the very same hotel. And many other hotels around Orange County over the years would follow. Not because of the contract troubles that would plague many SF/media conventions. No, we just kept *outgrowing* our facilities! As we grew, something odd began to happen. Furry fandom, which had started out as a subdivision of SF/fantasy/comic/media fandom, started to develop subdivisions of its own! And let's face it, some of the mini-factions of Furry don't like each other much it seems.

So why do we keep seeking each other out?

That's a question we've been working on for no less than ten years. It seems that, for all our divisions and differences, one factor keeps bringing us to common ground. We are Furry Fans. Furriness seems to be an inescapable part of our being; our psychological make-up. No, we don't claim to know why yet. I think Sy and I began ConFurence in part so we could explore that very question… and as with any search for knowledge, each answer on the journey has opened up a whole new set of questions. At this point in our history, maybe it's best that we say, "Thank you," to all of you, for helping us as we slowly draw a map of the landscape.

Steve Martin's cover to the program book for CF0. Contents included art by Brian O'Connell, Ken Sample, Phil Morrisey, Monica Livingstone, Noah Miller and others.

Fursuiting at a glance

by Gerdazech T. Civet

What is fursuiting?

A Fursuiter is anyone who is involved in the building and/or wearing of animal costumes for personal or professional use. The costume can be anything from a set of ears, to animal-like makeup to complex animatronic suits. I won't discuss the details of all the forms, but will try to cover the basics.

The building of ears and a tail is probably a good start for any beginner fursuiter. The production of ear and tails can be as complex or as simple as the person building them chooses. Ears can be made into a headdress. If you have long enough hair to cover your real ears, you can get a nice effect from ears. Tails are a bit more difficult to make look real. I build tails with spines, but some people just stuff them.

The building of makeup and latex masks can be difficult, but are a wonderful addition to any ears and tail. Simple makeup consists of the regular Halloween style, which can look very good. If you want to get more complex you can add some latex and make full facial appliances.

The building of a full fursuit is a much more expensive way to get into fursuiting. There are two general types of the basic full fursuit - 'naked' and 'dressed'. A dressed fursuit consists of clothes and fur, sometimes as little as a head, gloves and feet. This is often less expensive since fur is one of the higher costs in fursuit construction. It is also easier to wear as it can be cooler for the performer. A naked fursuit is all fur. It can have clothes put on later if desired (which increases heat even more). The benefits of having a naked fursuit is that you have more options using the costume: clothed, unclothed, morphic, non-morphic etc. Full fursuits take the longest time to build. It usually takes me about a month and a half to make a suit. Some people say that it takes about 6 months, others (who do it regularly or professionally) can build an entire suit in a few days.

Recently gaining popularity for their showiness are the animatronic fursuits. These are by far the most complex type of fursuiting. With an animatronic fursuit you first have to build the animatronic skeleton, the animatronic under parts of the suit. This first step is not an easy task for many. However getting an ear to twitch realistically or to be able to get a tail to move can be worth the extra effort. This by far is most expensive way to build fursuits.

Another key thing to consider is the problems involved in fursuit performance? Most are associated heat, suit wear and location.

Heat is the biggest danger you have to deal with when fursuiting. When you're in a fursuit you get hot. If you choose to be part of the costume presentation you usually also have to deal with hot lights on stage too. At ConFurence 9 I wore my suit too long and received a bad case of heatstroke for my efforts. To prevent heatstroke lots of water and energy drinks are a requirement. Time moderation is the key for new performers.

Location is another factor. Permissions and public relations can be a problem. The first thing I did when I finished my fursuit was to go to the local mall to see how long I could stand being in the suit. I got kicked out because I didn't think to actually get permission to be there. Looking back on the situation it was pretty stupid of me, but it was a learning experience. The other big mistake I made on that trip was that I didn't have a handler with me. (A handler is someone not in costume, who goes to assist you.)

Suit wear usually occurs because you may have hyperactive kids that are excited to see you. This means that tails get pulled and suits get tugged on. Sometimes older kids will try to harass you but on the most part that is what your handler is there to help you with.

With all the expense, time and difficulty in fusuiting, why build a fursuit? There is nothing like seeing a child or adult smile because of you. On the most part, if you feel like you want to do some fursuiting you will most likely be happy with the result. Although you may not ever get paid for any fursuiting activities you do, you can still have fun.

This has only touched the surface of what fursuiting really is. If you're interested in fursuiting, look around at the many web pages available, such as the two I've listed below. Also talk with fursuiters you meet online and at conventions.

Fursuiting Web Pages of Interest

http://www2.netcom.com/~cataroo/costumes.html (Cataroo in costumes)
http://users.aol.com/spkdpnch/Flinks.htm (Spiked Punch's favorite links)
http://www.animalcrackers.com.au (Tiger Tim's professional page from Australia)
http://www.crosswinds.net/phoenix/~tigrmascot/index.htm (Jurassic Al's characters)
http://www.helix.net/~shadow (D.Meerkat's page)
http://www.vulpes.net/francisco/Fursuit/ (Francisco's page)
http://thefoxden.com/ (YappyFox's page)
http://i.am/rapidtrabbit (Rabbit T. Rabbit's page, star of TV, parades and special events)
http://pleco.org/~orwin/fursuits (Orwin's page is mostly photos from various cons)
http://www.marylen.com (Major seller of mascot style costumes)

If anyone has any questions comments or flames about this article or fursuiting please feel free to e-mail me - zazu2@geocities.com

ConFurence Fursuit Award Winners

Here is a list of fursuits that won the popular vote at ConFurence pasts...

CF 1 - 1989

No event, hall costume award given

Zorro Fox

CF 2 - 1991

No event, hall costume award given

Unknown at this time

CF 3 - 1992

First costume event.

Panthres de Catsblood & Toron

CF 4 - 1993

Blue Fox & Vicky Rabbit

CF 5 - 1994

Candice Mule

CF 6 - 1995

Silvermane

CF 7 - 1996

Jack Salem

CF 8 - 1997

Balto, Jenna & Steele

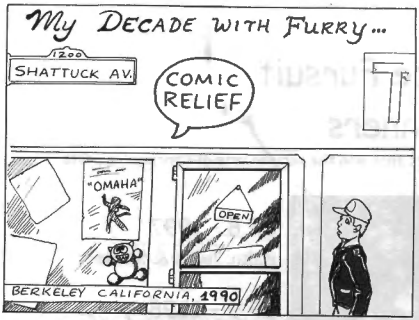
CF 9 - 1998

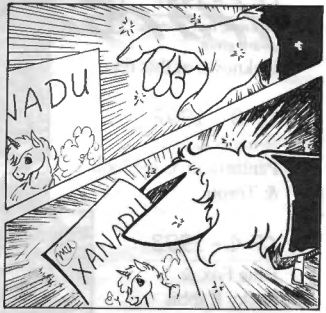
Popular vote split into two categories

Triggur & V'ril [advanced]

Zooma [introductory/beginner]

We regret the lack of pictures representing all the winners. These photos are from the private collection of Cataroo & Topfox.





All the great artists and writers in Furry have made this a great decade! Thank you all!

10
years

ConFurence

Who's Who

Compiled by Mark Merlino & Rod O'Riley

Here's a quick field-guide to some of the well-known furry folk you're liable to meet at a ConFurence. (Information on our Guests of Honor is in other parts of the book, of course!)

Darrel Benvenuto is the publisher of Vision Comics, home of the original *American Journal of Anthropomorphics* and many other titles.

Cataroo is an artist known for her male erotica. She is also a fursuit builder/performer, co originator of the FurSuit Dance and co-editor of the ConFurence Souvenir Book.

John Cawley is currently a producer on Nickelodeon's ANGRY BEAVERS. He is also a fursuit builder/performer, co originator of the FurSuit Dance, co-editor of the ConFurence Souvenir Book, and an author of several books on animation.

Mike and **Carole Curtis** are the creative writing team behind Shanda Fantasy Arts, home of *Shanda the Panda, Katmandu,* and other comic book titles. They were Guests of Honor at ConFurence Nine.

Tim Fay is a long standing artist in the furry community, having contributed to the original Vootie and Rowrbrazzle. He has recently moved into FurSuit building and performance.

Jeff Ferris is the editor of *Yarf!*, one of the longest-running furry fanzines.

Leslie Fish is a renowned and prolific writer of filk songs on many a topics. She sings them too!

Steve Gallacci is mostly famously the writer and artist behind *Albedo* (home of Erma Felna, EDF). He was a Guest of Honor at ConFurence Two.

Dr. Jay D. Glass is a professional psychologist and neurobiologist. He is the author of *The Animal Within Us*, which explores parallels between human and animal behavior.

Jim Groat is the creator of *Red Shetland.* He was a Guest of Honor at ConFurence One.

Arlene Harris was a winner of the Writers of the Future contest. She's a writer of short stories and novels, as well as a fanzine publisher.

Lance Ikegawa is a fursuit designer and performer, as well as working in furry comic books.

Ed Kline and **Kishma Danielle** are award-winning designers of fur suits, as well as other costumes and props. They were Guests of Honor at the first Further Confusion earlier this year.

Michele Light is a comic book artist in both the furry and anime genres. She was a Guest of Honor at ConFurence Nine.

Chuck Melville and **Edd Vick** are the brains behind MU Press, and the creators of *Tales of the Furkindred.* Chuck was also a Guest of Honor at ConFurence Three.

Kevin Andrew Murphy is an author of horror and dark fantasy. He worked on both the *Wild C.A.R.D.S.* series and several computer and FRP game modules.

Joseph and **Trish Ny** were the organizers of several Eastern-US furry conventions, such as ConFurence East and Furtasticon. In addition, Joseph is a published artist and illustrator.

Fred Patten is the editor of *Rowrbrazzle*, one of the longest-running (and largest!) APAs dedicated to funny animals. He is also a writer of articles and reviews for numerous publications throughout fandom.

Michael Payne is the author of *The Blood Jaguar* from Tor Books. He is also a writer of short stories and filk songs. Michael was a Guest of Honor at the first Further Confusion earlier this year.

Steve Plunkett is a furry puppet creator and performer.

Dr. Jane Robinson is a former paleontologist, current physical therapist, and the partner of Filk Guest of Honor Cynthia McQuillin. Dr. Robinson was a Guest of Honor at ConFurence Eight.

Lance Rund is creator and main writer of the *Associated Student Bodies* comics. He is also known for his bold line work art style.

Eric Schwartz is the creator of Amy the Squirrel, and well-known for his furry computer animation. He was a Guest of Honor at ConFurence Seven.

Terrie Smith is an artist on several furry comics (most recently *Associated Student Bodies* and *Havoc, Inc.*) as well as an illustrator and animator. She was a Guest of Honor at ConFurence Five.

Jefferson P. Swycaffer is the author of numerous science fiction novels, many of which feature furry characters.

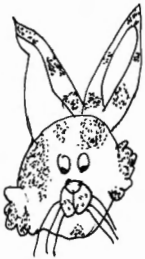
Taral Wayne is a long-time furry comic book artist, illustrator, fanzine publisher, and reviewer. He was a Guest of Honor at ConFurence Three.

Mel. White is the artist of the *Duncan & Mallory* graphic novels, as well as a frequent fanzine contributor, and an expert on MUCKs and other on-line environments. She was a Guest of Honor at ConFurence Eight.

Elin Winkler is the motivating force behind Radio Comix, home of *Furrlough* and other long-running furry titles.

Also at ConFurence you will find many well-known writers, illustrators, and publishers of furry comic books and stories – Most of them in our Den of Dealers, Publisher's Row, or Artists' Alley. Among them are such names as:

Steve Addlesee
Mitchell Beiro
David Bliss
E.T.
Elizabeth Bryan
Jose Calderon
Jack Cavanaugh "Bucky Boy"
Baron Engel
Frank Gembeck Jr
Roz Gibson
D.A.
Tygger Graf
James Hardiman
Harvo
Matt Henry
Shauntae Howard
Daphne Lage
James Lomax
Ed Luena
Steven Martin
Michael-Scot McMurry
Carla Speed McNeil
Phil Morrissey
John Nunnemacher
Tim O'Roarke "Tor"
C.K. Penchant
Mike Raabe
Dusty Rhodes
Gary Lee Seto "Gawain"
Ted Sheppard
Smudge
Gordon Spurlock
Pete Stoller
Brian Sutton
Trump
Susan Van Camp
Diana Vick
Tommy Yune.



This illustration is by Storm Tucker, daughter of Cataroo, who is also turning 10 in April of 1999.

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Congratulations to CF for 10 fur-filled, fun-filled years!

- the editors

虎
Waiting Dhan
Jan 98 : 7TH (-) FIRE
17TH - 27TH : 30° FIRE
month of January
Study : (X) Sheep
1997
3rd (courage) : 28 Jan 98 - 15 Feb 99 : 7TH (+) EARTH
3rd in line : ruling hours of 17TH - 5TH : 60° FIRE
color of Mid-Green : month of February
(WWW) Horse, Dog : (X) Monkey
1998